

Cold Therapy & Contrast Training: Boost Recovery Like the Pros

In 2025, cold and contrast therapy—the strategic use of heat and cold—has surged in popularity as a scientifically backed method for post-workout recovery, stress reduction, and overall resilience. Read on to discover how this age-old wellness technique is backed by modern research and how it can be safely applied to your gym routine at Kahma 24/7 Gym Shepparton.

What Is Cold Therapy & Contrast Training?

Cold therapy, commonly referred to as ice baths or cryotherapy, consists of short immersion in cold water (around 10-15°C) to reduce swelling, treat sore muscles, and improve wakefulness.

Contrast training, or contrast therapy, is alternating between hot (sauna or warm bath) and cold (cold bath or cold shower) immersion to improve circulation and recovery; these treatments (and benefits) are culturally grounded and originated from specific Finnish wellness traditions but are now becoming easy-access offerings in most gyms and studios.

How Does It Work? The Science Behind the Shock

Vasodilation (opening) and vasoconstriction (closure) by alternating with heat and cold causes blood vessels to open and close, which allows blood flow to remove metabolic buildup from muscle and tissue and assists in reducing inflammation.

This same process, when done repeatedly, could produce a hormetic stress response, thereby improving the function of the body, triggering the repair system of tissues, and improving long-term tolerance to stress.

Key Benefits of Contrast Therapy

Faster Muscle Recovery & Less Soreness

Contrast therapy decreases DOMS (delayed onset muscle soreness) and enhances recovery by flushing lactic acid and reducing inflammation markers—particularly beneficial to active members or those training double sessions a week.

Boosted Circulation & Improved Cardiovascular Response

Alternating temperatures is a natural "vascular workout"—improving nutrient delivery and assisting lymphatic drainage, benefitting cardiovascular function and energy recovery.

Enhanced Resilience & Mood

Cold stress triggers the release of norepinephrine, endorphins, and stress hormones that improve mood, alertness, and emotional resilience. Heat stress promotes relaxation through stimulation—what an awesome mood-balancing duo!

Reduced Inflammation & Joint Pain Relief

Contrast therapy can help with joint stiffness, swelling, and ongoing inflammation—making it a terrific weapon for practitioners dealing with niggles or early signs of arthritis.

Who Should Use It—And Who Shouldn't

Who benefits most:

Gym regulars, strength trainers, those with high-volume training

Members who are interested in natural stress reduction, improved sleep, or the management of inflammation

Use with caution:

Those with cardiovascular conditions, high blood pressure, or cold in-tolerance

Pregnant women or those with peripheral neuropathy or vascular disease should consult a healthcare provider first.

How to Safely Try Contrast Training at Kahma Shepparton

In-Gym or In-House Routine

Warm-Up: Time in a sauna or hot shower (10–20 minutes).

Cold Plunge or Shower: 1–3 minutes in ~10–15°C water.

Repeat for 2–3 cycles.

End with either cold (for inflammation) or heat (for relaxation).

Progression for Beginners

Begin with shorter exposure times, like 30-second cold showers following heat.

Practice respiratory drills to acclimate to the cold shock response.

Slowly increase tolerance—target cumulative cold exposure of 11 minutes per week per longevity programs.

Integration Post-Workout

Schedule contrast therapy within 30–60 minutes following training to enhance recovery benefits.

Utilize it following rigorous classes like Strength, Sweat, or HIIT at Kahma.

Bringing Contrast Therapy into Your Kahma Routine

At [Kahma 24/7 Gym Shepparton](#), you will have a safe space to try contrast techniques. Although we do not as yet have in-house saunas or plunge pools, we can walk you through DIY contrast procedures after workouts utilizing hot showers and cold taps. Trainers will be able to assist with adapting safe protocols and tracking progress.

Why Contrast Therapy Is Worth Exploring

Contrast therapy is more than a recovery trick—it's an intense tool for increasing circulation, reducing fatigue, improving mental toughness, and fine-tuning your recovery regimen. Sure, some elements of cryotherapy are questionable—particularly when administered directly after strength training—but contrast training presents a balanced, research-backed solution. Employed safely and routinely, it can elevate recovery to a new level.

H2: Ready to Try It for Yourself?

If you want to find out more, speak to one of our trainers about how to include heat and cold routines in your post-training routine. Ready to go further? Book a 7-day free trial at [Kahma Shepparton](#) and let us take you through the best way to recover like a pro.